

# 1999 Volunteer Report

*Volunteers conserve and interpret fish and wildlife and their habitat for present and future generations*





## A Special Message from the Director

Dear Volunteers,

As this century winds down and we face the challenges of a new millennium, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the growth and accomplishments of our Volunteer Program. In FY 1982, 4,000 of you helped us preserve natural resources. In FY 1999, nearly 29,000 of you donated almost 1,300,000 hours of time and talents toward conserving America's fish and wildlife heritage. You made a difference in so many ways. Whether it was collecting salmon eggs for rearing at a hatchery, completing a habitat restoration project, or impacting young lives by leading field trips to refuges, your contributions have been invaluable.

Because of your generosity and dedication, the American public appreciates our Nation's wild places. Your devotion has enabled us to reach out to neighboring communities and instill a stewardship ethic in America's young people. Volunteers truly do "make it happen!"

With great thanks,  
Jamie Rappaport Clark

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jamie Rappaport Clark".



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*Key*

<b>AARP</b>	American Association of Retired Persons
<b>ESO</b>	Ecological Services Office
<b>FRO</b>	Fisheries Resource Office
<b>LEO</b>	Law Enforcement Office
<b>NFH</b>	National Fish Hatchery
<b>NWFR</b>	National Wildlife and Fish Refuge
<b>NWR</b>	National Wildlife Refuge
<b>SCA</b>	Student Conservation Association
<b>WMD</b>	Wetland Management District

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# Volunteers Make It Happen

The annual National Volunteer Report is our way of highlighting the incredible amount of work volunteers accomplish for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service each year. It is with great thanks and appreciation that we acknowledge nearly 29,000 individuals and the hundreds of groups and organizations who contributed time and energy to our programs and to our Nation's wildlife.

## **What Gives Us the Authority to Accept Volunteer Services?**

The Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 (16 U.S.C. 742a-j), as amended by the Fish and Wildlife Improvement Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 742i) and the National Wildlife Refuge System Volunteer and Community Partnership Enhancement Act of 1998 (Pub.L. 105-242) authorizes us to accept volunteer services.

It is our goal to engage the public in fulfilling our mission of...“working with others, to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.”

Volunteers are vital in assisting us in protecting and conserving our Nation's fish, wildlife, and plants and the wild places they need. Volunteers work in the field and in visitor centers, at refuges or hatcheries, and in all programs and levels of our organization. They play a vital role in education, promoting a better understanding of the natural world and our contributions to its conservation.

For more information visit our website at [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov) or write to: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Division of Refuges-Room 670, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203. Contact the Regional Volunteer Coordinator in your area for specific programs (addresses and phone numbers are listed on page 17).



*Volunteer Matt Romero at Mora NFH (NM) conducts water quality analysis tests.*

# A Legacy of Volunteerism

It is through the hard work and dedication of volunteers that the Service and the National Wildlife Refuge System have grown and flourished. When plume hunters were slaughtering millions of migratory birds at the turn of the century, it was a concerned citizen named Paul Kroegel who donated his time and stepped in to stop the killing. From his home on the Indian River Lagoon in Florida, Paul witnessed thousands of pelicans and other marsh birds being annihilated on their nests to feed the demands of the plume hungry fashion industry.

Paul Kroegel made a promise to protect the wildlife of Pelican Island. Nearly 100 years later we (the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service) are sustaining that promise. Kroegel, who would eventually become the first Refuge Manager in the Nation, started a volunteer legacy that today nearly 29,000 people uphold.



*Paul Kroegel*

## A Few 1999 Program Highlights

**Need:** More Volunteer Coordinator positions around the country to manage the growing number of volunteers on refuges and hatcheries.

**Response:** The National Wildlife Refuge System Volunteer and Community Partnership Enhancement Act of 1998 authorized up to 20 Volunteer Pilot Programs. To date, 12 new Volunteer Coordinator positions are in place with 4 more being filled in FY 2000!

**Need:** More educational programs on national wildlife refuges to instill a conservation ethic in our youth.

**Response:** The National Wildlife Refuge System Volunteer and Community Partnership Enhancement Act of 1998 authorized Refuge Education Program Enhancement. The Division of Refuges developed guidance for this program.

**Need:** In the age of the Information Superhighway, a web site to reach a wider audience of potential volunteers.

**Response:** The Volunteer Web Page at [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov) is up and running! This site contains information on our program and a list of other natural resource agencies that work with volunteers. Interested parties can search for opportunities by State or title. The program will instantly find available volunteer openings and provide a job description, site address, and contact number.

**Need:** Stations asked for tools to help them better manage volunteers.

**Response:** We completed, printed and distributed the updated "Guidebook for Working with Volunteers" to all field stations in December 1999.

# Growth of the Volunteer Program

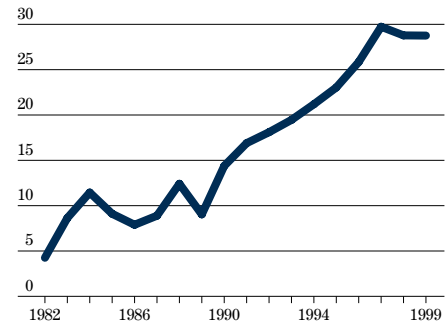
<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Number of Volunteers</i>	<i>Hours Donated</i>	<i>Dollar Value</i>
1982	4,251	128,440	\$854,000
1983	8,638	479,319	\$3,187,000
1984	11,447	527,150	\$3,632,000
1985	9,103	441,820	\$3,532,000
1986	7,892	386,934	\$3,094,000
1987	8,891	383,983	\$3,157,000
1988	12,416	478,568	\$3,871,000
1989	9,036	575,695	\$4,427,095
1990	14,382	713,441	\$5,593,377
1991	16,895	768,820	\$6,273,571
1992	18,103	968,401	\$8,231,409
1993	19,460	993,681	\$8,734,447
1994	21,186	880,999*	\$8,069,951
1995	23,034	909,072	\$8,590,729
1996	25,840	1,108,208	\$10,860,439
1997	29,734	1,335,738	\$13,090,232
1998	28,780	1,505,222	\$14,841,489**
1999	28,757	1,277,207	\$13,078,599

\*In FY 1994 Region 8 Volunteer Program transferred from FWS to National Biological Survey.

\*\*The FY 1998 National Volunteer Report contained figures using the nationally accepted private sector labor rate of \$13.74 per hour. Previous years' reports and the FY 1999 report use a value derived from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, General Pay Schedule at a GS-5 step 1. We corrected the 1998 value so that statistics remain comparable over time.

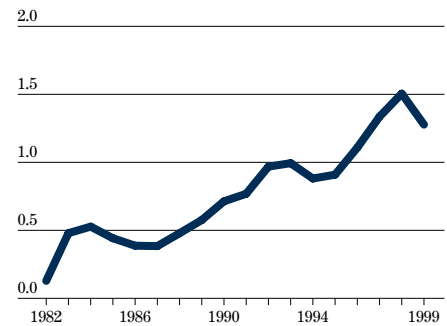
## Number of Volunteers

*In Thousands*



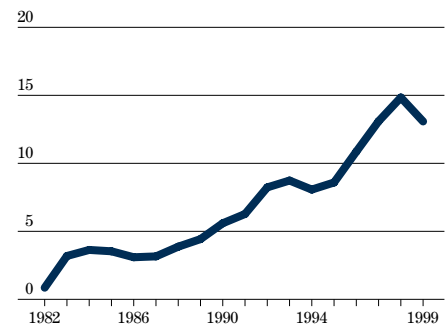
## Hours Donated

*In Millions*



## Dollar Value

*In Millions*



# What Is the Volunteer Program?

Volunteer Program within the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service vary as much as the volunteers who get involved. You can find volunteers on national wildlife refuges, fish hatcheries, and wetland management districts, in regional and state offices, and even in our Headquarters Office in Washington,

D.C. Some programs offer college students opportunities to get “in-field” experience, other programs use the worldly talents and life-long skills of retirees, still other programs are a mix of both! No matter what the task, volunteers are there to make it happen!



*Volunteer Diane Bruell gets a personal lesson in raptor handling at Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR in Colorado. Diane has donated more than 5,000 hours!*



*Volunteer Linda Conlin is rinsing Lahontan Cutthroat Trout eggs in the spawning shed located at Pyramid Lake, Nevada.*

# Who Are Our Volunteers?

Our volunteers are high school students planting trees, Girl Scouts working on merit badges, college students surveying duck nests, outdoor enthusiasts maintaining trails, and retirees staffing visitor centers, just to name a few. Volunteers come from all walks of life and bring all levels of expertise. Each one is unique and offers their own special skills to our Nation's wild places.

Volunteers include talented and dedicated people:

Like Paul Blevins at *Bon Secor National Wildlife Refuge* in Alabama who has volunteered at the refuge for the last 20 years! Every day, Mr. Blevins, walks the refuge's Jeff Friend Trail to fill brochure boxes, trim branches and keep the trail free from litter. He maintains the refuge's beautiful hummingbird/butterfly gardens, opens and closes trail gates daily, and provides birding information to the visiting public. Mr. Blevins is a shining example of what it means to be 78 years young!



Paul Blevins at *Bon Secor NWR* in Alabama provides refuge information to visitors.

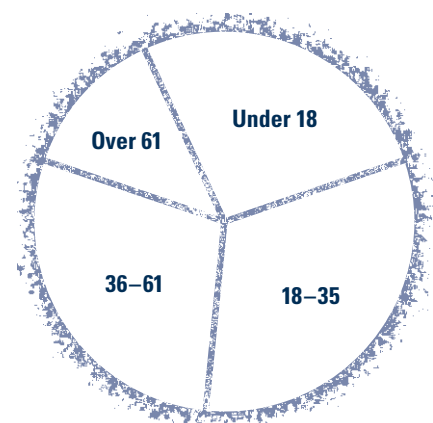
Marian and Russel Frobe at *Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge* in Washington. For the last 7 years they have annually donated more than 400 hours! They band and count songbirds, conduct marsh bird surveys, and assist with riparian restoration projects. Marian is also an active board member of the refuge's newly established Refuge Support Group, Friends of Turnbull NWR.

Matt Domenech has put in more than 100 volunteer hours this year at *Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge* in California. The Bay Area summer youth program, "Kids Who Care," honored 11 year old Matt for his service to the refuge. Congratulations Matt!

## Age Range of Volunteers

Region	Under 18	18-35	36-61	Over 61
1	1,480	4,324	3,075	1,127
2	1,150	629	778	424
3	1,415	1,249	1,084	524
4	1,227	1,132	1,126	729
5	1,270	1,003	1,394	673
6	1,090	647	694	211
7	39	162	85	16
Totals	7,671	9,146	8,236	3,704

## Age Range of Volunteers



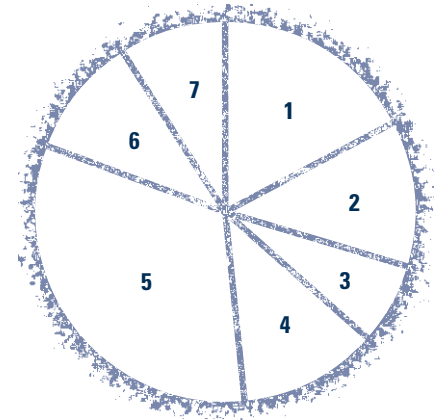


# Volunteer Program Values

The value of volunteers is astounding! We realized a 650% return on our investment in Fiscal Year 1999. Volunteers contributed 1,277,207 hours valued at more than \$13 million. Service staff contributed 37,856 hours ensuring that volunteers had supervision, proper training, housing, adequate supplies and equipment and, of course, fun!

Volunteer Program Operating Costs		
Region	Operations Costs	Staff Hours
1	\$353,500	2,349
2	\$254,322	11,542
3	\$141,687	1,671
4	\$242,770	2,349
5	\$661,596	15,183
6	\$210,908	4,412
7	\$185,800	350
Totals	\$2,050,583	37,856

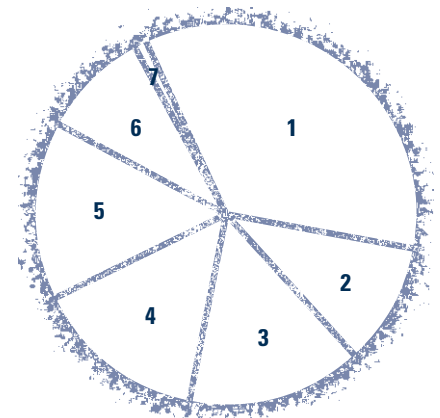
Volunteer Program Operating Costs By Region



Volunteer Hours/Value

Region	Volunteers	Hours	Value*
1	10,006	320,251	\$3,095,050
2	2,981	177,252	\$1,815,060
3	4,272	173,511	\$1,776,753
4	4,214	240,672	\$2,464,481
5	4,340	207,304	\$2,122,834
6	2,642	123,266	\$1,262,244
7	302**	52,947	\$ 542,177
Totals	28,757	1,277,207	\$13,078,599

Number of Volunteers By Region



\*Value is derived using the U.S. Office of Personnel Management 1999 General Pay Schedule of a GS 5-1.

\*\*Historically, Alaska (Region 7) has the fewest numbers of volunteers. However, these volunteers work long hours to accomplish their goals within the short, demanding summer season.

# Special Programs

## Student Conservation Association

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Student Conservation Association (SCA) have enjoyed 18 years of partnership of volunteers. SCA is an important source of qualified, full-time volunteers. In 1999, SCA recruited, placed, and supported more than 100 Service volunteers nationwide. Through SCA, we obtain qualified students and help them develop conservation and leadership skills. SCA provided volunteers and interns to us through four programs: the Resource Assistant Program, the Conservation Associates Program, the Conservation Work Crew Program, and the Conservation Career Development Program.

### *Resource Assistant Program*

SCA Resource Assistants are college-age volunteers placed in positions similar to that of seasonal employees. Many of these volunteers serve as interns and receive college credit for their efforts. The Resource Assistant Program is the most popular among college-age students. Seventy-eight of SCA's 957 volunteers worked for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. This program allowed students to gain highly valued hands-on field experience while working under the supervision of professionals in their field of study. This year 42 stations hosted SCA interns and volunteers.

### *Conservation Associates Program*

Established in 1996, the Conservation Associates Program provides longer term volunteer work and consists primarily of students over 21 years of age. Of the 171 Conservation Associates placed, 9 worked on Service lands.

### *Conservation Work Crew Program*

Conservation Work Crews consist of up to eight students per crew. The crews accomplished a tremendous amount of trail work at Great Bay NWR, ME; Kenai NWR, AK; and



*SCA volunteer at Warm Springs Regional Fisheries Center (GA) conducts an environmental education program in the visitor center.*

the Duwamish River, WA. Along with building, cleaning, and maintaining trails, the crews participated in a wide range of environmental education programs exposing them to a variety of environmental issues and concerns.

### *Conservation Career Development Program*

The Service's Office of Diversity and Civil Rights in Arlington, Virginia, hosted a Conservation Career Development Intern. We place Conservation Career Development Program interns in offices that allow them to gain an understanding of and be exposed to the many career options and choices in the field of conservation.

*For more information, please contact:*

Wallace Elton, Director,  
Resource Assistant Program  
The Student Conservation  
Association  
P. O. Box 550  
Charlestown, NH 03603  
603/543 1700

## American Association of Retired Persons Volunteer Talent Bank

The Volunteer Talent Bank is a national volunteer referral service managed by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). Members of the AARP and others, age 50 and over, interested in volunteer opportunities can register with the Talent Bank. We match potential volunteers with volunteer positions that best suit their interests, skills, time commitment, and geographic location. We have drawn upon Talent Bank volunteers many times. These individuals bring life-long skills and knowledge and are great resources. Of the 9,500 people who have registered with the Talent Bank, 25% indicated an interest in volunteering in the area of conservation. This is good news for us and other environmental and conservation groups.

*For more information about the talent bank or to see if there is a potential volunteer for your needs, contact:*

Cynthia Langley  
AARP Volunteer Talent Bank  
601 E. Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20049  
202/434 3211

# Partnerships and Support Groups

Partnerships are vital to us. These joint efforts help us accomplish the many goals we have set for our agency. We enter into agreements with a diverse group of organizations and individuals, at the national, regional, State, and local levels to involve the public in fulfilling our mission. Numerous national and local groups have made significant contributions to the many successes the National Wildlife Refuge System and the Service. Notable partners include the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the National Wildlife Refuge Association, the National Audubon Society, Refuge Support Groups, the American Association of Retired Persons, the Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement, Ducks Unlimited, Inc., Safari Club International, the Outdoor Writers Association, the Student Conservation Association, and many, many others.

## **Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement (C.A.R.E.)**

The Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement, or C.A.R.E., is a coalition of 18 diverse conservation and environmental organizations brought together by a common goal: to support and enhance the National Wildlife Refuge System by addressing operations and maintenance needs. Funding shortfalls have plagued the Refuge System for years. Roads, buildings, and facilities are in disrepair; we are not meeting national safety standards; habitats are degrading; and under staffing is common place. Through the hard work and dedication of C.A.R.E., the Refuge System continues to receive much needed increases in funding to help alleviate these needs. We are realizing improvements in facilities, visitor services, and habitat restoration.



*Alaska Natural History Association volunteer Deb Hanson staffs an outreach booth for International Migratory Bird Day.*

## **Support Groups**

Support Groups (often referred to as “Friends”) are local citizens who have established a partnership with their hometown national wildlife refuge, fish hatchery, or other Service site. In an effort to encourage and increase public involvement in the National Wildlife Refuge System, the Division of Refuges established a “Friends Initiative” in 1996. In only 3 years we have assisted in forming 34 new groups.

Congress passed the National Wildlife Refuge System Volunteer and Community Partnership Enhancement Act of 1998, which broadened our ability to partner with local citizens. Through this initiative, Support Groups have been sprouting up across the country. The need for information and guidance on how to create and organize a group has increased steadily for the last several years. To meet this need, we developed and implemented several new and innovative ideas. We established a “Friends” training

course and offer it annually to managers interested in learning about working with a Support Group. Mentors from established Support Groups travel around the country facilitating the formation of new groups. A small grant program is available through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to aid groups with start-up, capacity building, and other projects. Most importantly, the support groups developed a network of support and camaraderie nationwide.

## **Audubon Refuge Keepers (ARK)**

The 1996 National Audubon Society’s nationwide initiative to build and encourage community appreciation and support for wildlife refuges has reaped tremendous benefits for us. We involve local support groups, called Audubon Refuge Keepers (ARK), in all aspects of refuge enhancement, from habitat restoration to environmental education. As of September 30, 1999, Audubon established 75 ARK groups to assist local refuges. The ARK program is an integral part of

Audubon's Wildlife Refuge Campaign working to build a broader nationwide understanding and appreciation for national wildlife refuges.

### Cooperating Associations

Cooperating Associations are "not for profit" partner corporations which receive authorization to create revenue on public lands. The National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 and the Refuge Recreation Act of 1962, as amended, approved this authorization. These Associations have a 501c(3) filing with the Internal Revenue Service, allowing them tax-exempt status.

Cooperating Associations are among our earliest partners dating back more than 35 years! Associations enhance our mission by creating, producing, and selling educational and interpretive materials and articles to the public. Many field stations who partner with an association allow them space in an office or visitor center for a bookstore or sales area. These interpretive and educational materials and services enhance the visitors' understanding of the natural, cultural, and recreation resources of the area, as well as our need to conserve them. Each year millions of dollars are generated through associations. These Associations fund many of our interpretive, educational, recreational and biological initiatives. Cooperating Associations have been key to our efforts in educating the American people about the value of our wild places!

### Partnerships and Support Group Highlights

The *Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society* (NC) was a major partner in the creation of the Charles Kuralt Trail. The Trail is a driving tour that links eleven national wildlife refuges and one fish hatchery in eastern North Carolina and Virginia. Two Interpretive Waysides are in place with more to come.

The *Atlantic Audubon Society* (NJ) designed a new and exciting program called the "Refuge Series of Birding" to raise community awareness of the Edwin B. Forsythe NWR. They invited community members to partake in a short fun-filled trip around the refuge in search of as many bird species as they could find. Contestants came from near and far and Audubon member John Williamson "umpired" the event. A great day was had by all!

Members of the *Alaska Natural History Association* (AK) successfully raised more than \$40,000 to continue running the Kodiak Summer Science and Salmon Camp after funding had been eliminated.

The *Friends of Bombay Hook NWR* (DE) and the refuge's volunteers won Delaware's "Governors's Outstanding Environmental Group Award" for their hard work and dedication in supporting the refuge and its mission!

The *Sequoia Audubon Society* (CA) helped secure the transfer of Bair Island in San Francisco Bay to the National Wildlife Refuge System. We will now spare the unique habitat on this island from the threat of development. The ARK group educates the public about the habitats and uses of the island.



*Atlantic Audubon Society members partaking in the Refuge Series of Birding at Edwin B. Forsythe NWR (NJ).*

# Recognition of Outstanding Volunteers

This year the National Wildlife Refuge Association and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation sponsored the National Wildlife Refuge System Awards. Among them are the *Volunteer of the Year Award* and the *Support Group of the Year Award*, two of the most prestigious honors in the Refuge System. They present these at an awards ceremony held during the annual North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference.

## Volunteer of The Year Award

This year's recipients of the distinguished award are husband and wife, *Paul and Ann Smith*. The Smiths volunteer at Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Volunteers since 1990, they have contributed thousands of hours to the refuge's many programs including biology, visitor service, maintenance, and planning. Some of their most important work has been with shorebirds. Their weekly and biweekly shorebird counts have provided solid data to the Service and other national and international organizations that monitor shorebirds around the world. The Smith's survey routes cover 20 miles of beach and 6 impoundments. During peak migration, more than 40 species of up to 10,000 shorebirds need to be counted and identified at one time! The Smith's are dedicated to providing quality visitor tours and programs and have trained new personnel and other volunteers to do the same. Their efforts over the last ten years have been invaluable to Chincoteague and the Service. Thank you, Paul and Ann, for your outstanding work and dedication!



*Volunteer of The Year Award recipients Paul and Ann Smith.*  
Jennifer Cording, Chincoteague Beacon

## Support Group of The Year Award

The *Friends of the Rydell Refuge Association* are the recipients of the Support Group of the Year Award. It was only three years ago that a small group of local citizens banded together as a nonprofit organization to help develop programs and facilities at Rydell National Wildlife Refuge in northwestern Minnesota. Established in 1992, the 2,120 acre Rydell National Wildlife Refuge has only one full-time Service employee.

In their three years of existence the Friends of the Rydell Refuge Association have raised more than \$260,000 for refuge facilities, received more than \$7,500 of in-kind donations, and their 65 volunteers have contributed nearly 12,000 volunteer hours. A few major projects the group has taken on include staffing the Visitor Center, providing educational programs to the public, and fostering more than 47 partnerships! The Association has been instrumental in making its programs accessible to all audiences. More than 7 miles of trail are now universally accessible and each year up to 25 individuals with disabilities partake in the refuge's special deer hunt. Accessible fishing access, overlooks, restrooms, and benches enhance the visitor's experience to this unique refuge. We are honored to acknowledge the wonderful and important accomplishments of the Friends of Rydell Refuge Association. The efforts of this group are a shining example of what enthusiasm, dedication and cooperation can produce.



*Support Group of The Year Award. From left to right: Wayne Goeken, Friends Secretary; Bill Hartwig, Regional Director; William Roeszler, Friends President; and Dick Julian, Refuge Manager.*

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## Recognition of Outstanding Volunteers

### Other Outstanding Volunteers

Volunteer Karen Parlett of *Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge* (WV), who is also a local school teacher, wrote and received a \$10,000 Toyota Tapestry education grant which targeted the refuge for outreach and on-the-ground improvements to visitor services. Over half of the grant money went directly to purchasing materials for a wildlife viewing blind, trail head signs, and education/interpretative materials.

William G. Phippen, Jr., a volunteer at the *Arizona Ecological Services Field Office* (AZ) developed a brochure for the Arizona Partners in Fish and Wildlife Program. He created the framework for an outreach initiative so the staff can promote the Service's mission to diverse audiences.



*Arizona Ecological Services Office volunteer, Julia Wesley, removes a hummingbird from a mist net.*

Bruce Radabaugh a volunteer at *Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge* (TX) was recognized for his efforts in supporting the refuge's biological program. Bruce works three days a week electronically tracking endangered ocelots through radio telemetry. He also assists with waterfowl surveys, breeding bird surveys, and monitoring black-bellied whistling duck boxes. The refuge staff greatly appreciates his hard work.

Bruce Taylor, a practicing physician and volunteer at the Service's *Clark R. Bavin National Forensics Laboratory* (OR), conducted more than 1,200 micro satellite analyses of DNA from North American black bears and wolves.

Steve Williams at *Kealia Pond NWR* (HI) trained and managed 22 other volunteers to monitor the endangered hawksbill sea turtles nesting on non-refuge property along Maui beaches. His attention to detail and his outreach effort concerning the turtles has allowed us to work "beyond our boundaries."

Mark Burkholder plays an important role at *Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge* (CA). He has taken the lead role in the native plant garden where he is involved in all aspects of the project including soil sampling, trail building, planting, and mulching. We use these plants to restore native coastal sage shrub. Mark is the editor of the "Friends of Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge" newsletter and is an active member of the Support Groups Board of Directors.

# Volunteers' Conservation Achievements

## Wildlife

For the past several years, Chad Gideon at *Rainwater Basin WMD* (NE) has been surveying Canada goose flocks reading neck collars and leg bands which helps monitor their migration and habitat uses.

Twenty volunteers at *Agassiz NWR* (MN) donated nearly 20,000 hours tracking moose, capturing and tracking wolves, performing wildlife surveys, and entering all this important information into a computer database.

The volunteers at *Bozeman Fish Technology Center* (MT) assist in setting up experiments, collecting scientific data, conducting studies, and feeding fish.

Sixteen year-old Mark Mapel is already a seasoned volunteer at *Washita NWR* (OK). He developed and completed two special projects including a much needed raptor nesting survey and a reptile/amphibian survey. He collected the data and made it usable by producing well-written reports of his findings.

Dan Sutherland volunteers one day a week at *Jordan River NFH* (MI). Dan is associated with the Eisenhower Center, a facility supporting programs that assist in the rehabilitation of persons with closed-head injuries. Dan's communication skills have greatly improved, and he is a valued asset with fish culture activities.

Volunteers and interns at *Currituck NWR* (NC) spent more than 40 nights insuring hatchling loggerhead turtles would reach the Atlantic Ocean safely.

At *Parker River NWR* (MA) volunteers continue to educate the beach-going public about closures to protect nesting habitat of the piping plover.



*Cory Lawton, a volunteer at the Lower Great Lakes Fishery Resource Office, returns a sonic tagged adult male sturgeon to the lower Niagara River.*

## Habitat

More than 150 volunteers spent 3 weekends at *Balcones Canyonlands NWR* (TX) planting 3,000 shin oak bare root seedlings to restore 35 acres of black-capped vireo nesting habitat.

Two volunteers at the *Rock Island ESO* (MI) assisted contaminant biologists on the Nahant Marsh Superfund Site. Their work included researching remedial action on the site, interviewing restoration experts, and compiling information to help the biologist write a final restoration plan for the Superfund Site.

A total of 120 seventh-grade students logged 1,440 hours conducting water quality tests on 5 sites on *Sherbourne NWR* (MN).

At *Chattahoochee Forest NFH* (GA) volunteers constructed a 300-foot retaining wall to stabilize an eroding creek bank. The wall will offset erosion and sediment pollution into Rock Creek.

One hundred and twenty-five volunteers cleaned up 1,784 pounds of garbage from the coastal areas of *St. Marks NWR* (FL).

John McGovern at *Detroit Lakes WMD* (MN) provided valuable support to the District's seed harvesting and cleaning programs, maintained vehicles, and always is willing to lend assistance.

For more than ten years Carol Silva at *Hakalau Forest NWR* (HI) has been organizing and leading volunteer groups in reforestation and weed control projects.

## People

At *Piedmont NWR* (GA) 30 volunteers donated more than 653 hours of service during the 8th annual deer hunt for wheelchair bound participants.

Volunteers at the *Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee NWR* (FL) made it possible for the refuge to hold an incredible 100 special events.

## Volunteers' Conservation Achievements

Even rainy coastal weather can't keep *Makah NFH* (WA) volunteer Weldon Sharp off the job! No matter the task or the weather conditions, Weldon is sure to get it done. His duties include spawning of adult salmon and steelhead trout, care for incubating eggs and fry, and feeding and rearing young salmon and steelhead trout.

Mary and Larry Jordan have contributed more than 2,500 volunteer hours staffing the bookstore at *Neal Smith NWR* (IA).

Volunteer, Naomi Sherer manages recruiting, staffing, and operations of the McNary Environmental Education Center at *McNary NWR* (WA). She works many hours each week to promote the Education Center and to keep it open for school groups and visitors.

Sheryl Carnegi at *Bosque del Apache NWR* (NM) serves as the refuges Volunteer Coordinator. A volunteer herself, Sheryl helps organize the large program and makes sure things run smoothly.

At *Hobe Sound NWR* (FL) a cadre of highly talented and passionate volunteers donated more than 1,700 hours to serve over 11,000 visitors on site and nearly 26,000 people off site. They conducted the vast majority of refuge outreach and led more than 70 special events that highlighted the refuge!

### Facilities

Full-time seasonal volunteers Charles and Cynthia Curtis parked their RV at *Chassahowitzka NWR* (FL) and got right to work. They rehabilitated exhibits, maintained the yard and grounds, and staffed the visitor contact area.

Whitney Mattson at the *Yreka Fish and Wildlife Office* (WA) volunteered long hours constructing a web page for the office. A high school student, Whitney impressed everyone with his dedication and hard work.

Jack Webb and his wife, Shirley, have volunteered at *Okefenokee NWR* (GA) for 11 years. Jack rebuilt canoe shelters in the swamp, rebuilt a 4,000 foot boardwalk, re-roofed buildings, and maintained signs.

Cory Borum at *Innoko NWR* (AK) donated more than 720 hours building heated resident cabins for field personnel. These cabins greatly expand our field capabilities, especially during colder weather.

Mary Beth Conney at *Great Swamp NWR* (NJ) recruited 48 new volunteers who cleared 4 miles of trails and rebuilt a bridge in the wilderness area of the refuge.

High school students from a local vocational-technical school constructed a wildlife viewing blind and trail-head sign structure at *Ohio River Islands NWR* (WV).

Dave Tyler, a volunteer at *Black Bayou Lake NWR* (LA), has taken on the monumental task of supervising the renovation of a 101-year old two story planter's house that we will use as an Environmental Education Center.



Judy Arnold at *Tensas River NWR* (LA) escorts mascot "Small Claw" during National Hunting and Fishing Day celebrations.



# Innovative Approaches

AT&T has been a significant partner to *Great Swamp NWR* (NJ). AT&T has provided funding for the refuge Intern Program which allows the refuge to bring on three Interns throughout the year and provide them with a small stipend. The company has also been active in the Volunteer Program by allowing their employees to volunteer at the refuge on company time.

*Leavenworth NFH* (WA) partnered with a variety of local organizations to carry out the mission of the hatchery including Trout Unlimited, Chelan County Worker Inmate Crew, Private Industry Council-Wenatchee Washington Office, and Entiat High School. These groups provided essential support to the hatchery for operations, maintenance, education, and outreach.

Employees from the Morrison Knudsen Environmental Corporation were recruited to conduct environmental education programs at the *Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR* (CO) during their work hours. Shell Oil Company funded half of the hours with the other half being contributed to the Volunteer Program.

*Hamden Slough NWR* (ND) partnered with North Dakota State University, National Soils Laboratory, and the National Hydric Soils Technical Committee to bring scientists from around the Nation to a soil seminar that demonstrated new techniques and new information for determining seepage potential from soil profiles.

## Challenges and Concerns

Each year the Volunteer Program becomes more and more important to the Service. As budgets become tighter and workloads increase, we find ourselves relying more heavily upon our partners and volunteers. Despite the obvious value of these volunteers to the Refuge System, we find that many of our stations and offices are underfunded and understaffed in supporting the volunteer programs.

### **Needs**

- Increase funding for volunteer programs, especially at the field level.
- Establish additional Volunteer Coordinator positions in key locations to keep pace with this ever-growing program. Fully fund these positions.
- Improve lodging, equipment, supplies, and access to training to better accommodate volunteers.

## Our Future

The future of the Volunteer Program lies in our continued commitment to each and every individual who has donated time and energy to our Nation's wildlife and the wild places they need. With a shared vision and a common goal, our partners and volunteers are helping us fulfill our promise to wildlife. As we approach our Centennial Celebration in the year 2003, it is more important than ever for us to recognize and acknowledge the profound role volunteers have played in our past and the pivotal role they will play in our future. With their help we face the new millennium with a renewed sense of accomplishment and the excitement of what is yet to come.

# U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

## Regional Contacts

Opportunities are available to contribute to the conservation of wildlife on national wildlife refuges, fish facilities, ecological services offices, and numerous other offices from Hawaii to Maine and from Alaska to Puerto Rico. More than 93 million acres of wildlife habitat is encompassed within the Service. The diversity of these habitats range from deserts in the southwest to urban wetlands in Philadelphia and from forests of the Pacific northwest to swamps in Georgia. We need volunteers for biological and archaeological inventories, outdoor recreation planning, population censusing, maintenance of habitats and facilities, natural resource planning, clerical assistance, environmental education, and public outreach. For complete details, contact the office nearest you.

### **CA, HI, ID, NV, OR, WA**

Contact: Volunteer Coordinator  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
911 N. E. 11th Avenue  
Eastside Federal Complex  
Portland, OR 97232-4181  
503/231 2077

### **AZ, NM, OK, TX**

Contact: Volunteer Coordinator  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
P. O. Box 1306  
Albuquerque, NM 87103  
505/248 6635

### **IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, MO, OH, WI**

Contact: Volunteer Coordinator  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
1 Federal Dr., Federal Bldg.  
Fort Snelling, MN 55111  
612/713 5444

### **AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, PR**

Contact Volunteer Coordinator  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
1875 Century Blvd., NW  
Atlanta, GA 30345  
404/679 7178

### **CT, DE, MA, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT, VA, WV**

Contact: Volunteer Coordinator  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
300 Westgate Center Drive  
Hadley, MA 01035  
413/253 8303

### **CO, KS, MT, NE, ND, SD, UT, WY**

Contact: Volunteer Coordinator  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Denver Federal Center  
P. O. Box 25486  
Denver, CO 80225-0486  
303/236 8145, ext. 606

### **Alaska**

Contact: Volunteer Coordinator  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
1011 E. Tudor Road  
Anchorage, AK 99503  
907/786 3391

*or*

### **Visit Our Web Site**

<http://www.fws.gov> and  
select 'Volunteers.'

**U.S. Department of the Interior  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**

<http://www.fws.gov>

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